

Response
Serial No. 09/893,677
Attorney Docket No. 010680

REMARKS

Claims 1-19 are pending in the present application. Claims 1-4, 6, 10, 12 and 13 have been amended. No new matter is added. It is respectfully submitted that this Amendment is fully responsive to the Office Action dated November 29, 2005.

As to the Merits:

As to the merits of this case, the Examiner sets forth the following rejections:

- 1) claims 1 and 3-19 stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Igarashi (U.S. Patent No. 5,902,232, of record) in view of Takahashi et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,588,948, or record); and

- 2) claim 2 stand rejected under 35 USC. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Igarashi (U.S. Patent No. 5,902,232) in view of Takahashi et al. (US Patent No. 5,588,948) and in further view of Igarashi (U.S. Patent No. 5,954,634, of record).

Each of these rejections is respectfully traversed.

Claim 1, as amended, now calls for *wherein said camera head includes a part of said relay optical system, said imaging optical system and said solid-stage image sensor, and the relayed image is formed between the relay optical system and the imaging optical system in the camera*

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head, and wherein said front-end insertion section includes the objective optical system, a remaining part of the relay optical system, the imaging optical system and the solid-state image sensor; and the insertion section and camera head are detachable.

The Examiner asserts in page 3, lines 2-5 of the Action that, “Igarashi further teaches the relayed image is in the camera head and a field mask is disposed at or near the position of the relayed image (Igarashi: column 23, lines 38-49, wherein the field mask is the visual field mask, the camera head is the optical system).

However, as shown in Fig. 12 of Igarashi, the primary image I_1 is formed in the insertion section and the secondary image I_2 is formed in the grip section 5. See, col. 18, lines 53-61 of Igarashi.

Therefore, while Igarashi may disclose in col. 23, lines 43-46 that “it is desirable to dispose a visual field mask ... at a location of the secondary image which imposes a weak spatial restriction,” Igarashi fails to disclose or fairly suggest that the secondary image is formed in the TV camera 6.

Instead, as discussed above, the secondary image I_2 is formed in the grip section 5. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that Igarashi fails to disclose or fairly suggest the features of

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claim 1 concerning *the relayed image is formed between the relay optical system and the imaging optical system in the camera head.*

In addition, as already discussed in the previous Amendment dated July 20, 2005, in Takahashi, the operating/holding section 3 does not include a part of the relay lens and therefore, the image formed by the relay lens is not inside the operation/holding section 3. In Fig. 1 of Takahashi, the relay lens 6 is apparently in the insertion section 2 and the image of an object is formed in the last lens of the relay lens. Lens 9a (or 9b) forms an image of the image on the CCD 1 1a (or 11b). However, these lenses correspond to the imaging optical system in claim 1, not a part of the relay optical system. Moreover, it is submitted that Takahashi also fails to disclose or fairly suggest that the inserting section 2 and the operating/holding section 3 are detachable.

Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that neither reference, Igarashi (U.S. Patent No. 5,902,232) or Takahashi, discloses or fairly suggests the features of claim 1 concerning *wherein said camera head includes a part of said relay optical system, said imaging optical system and said solid-stage image sensor, and the relayed image is formed between the relay optical system and the imaging optical system in the camera head, and wherein said front-end insertion section includes the objective optical system, a remaining part of the relay optical system, the imaging optical system and the solid-state image sensor; and the insertion section and camera head are detachable.*

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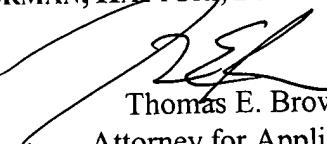
In view of the aforementioned amendments and accompanying remarks, Applicants submit that the claims, as herein amended, are in condition for allowance. Applicants request such action at an early date.

If the Examiner believes that this application is not now in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney to arrange for an interview to expedite the disposition of this case.

If this paper is not timely filed, Applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. The fees for such an extension or any other fees that may be due with respect to this paper may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-2866.

Respectfully submitted,

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